Functioning of War House in the Department of Commerce

956. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a 'War House' has been constituted in the Department of Commerce;

(b) whether its meetings are being held regularly;

(c) whether Government are satisfied with its working; and

(d) the main points of its investigations?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) The government has constituted an Inter Ministerial Standing Group consisting of commerce Secretary, Revenue Secretary, Secretary (SSI and ARI), Secretary (Deptt, of Animal Husbandry and Dairying), Secretary (Department of Agriculture and Cooperation) and Director General of Foreign Trade for Tracking, collating and analyzing import data of 300 sensitive items. The group has already started functioning and has held 3 meetings. As per the analysis of the data conducted by the group it is seen that the total import of 300 sensitive items for the period April—June 2001 has shown a negative growth rate of 13% compared to the same period last year. Based on the import data, the group has concluded that the overall picture that emerges from these quick estimates is one of normal trading activity in response to demand and supply factors and that the present tariff structure and other steps taken by the Government are adequate enough to prevent any surge in imports. The Group is working satisfactorily.

Industrialisation of backward districts in Andhra Pradesh

957. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the measures Government have initiated for the industrialisation of industrially backward districts of Mahbubnagar and Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh apart from rebate in income tax; and

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.